



## June 26-27, 2020 -- Sergei Khrushchev death puzzling

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#### Cranston, Rhode Island

**Sergei Khrushchev**, the 84-year old son of Soviet leader **Nikita Khrushchev**, was found dead from a gunshot to his head at his home in **Cranston, Rhode Island** on June 17. Oddly, news of the death of Khrushchev was not reported until **June 24**, a full week later.

Cranston Police Major **Todd Patalano** said, "There were no *immediate* signs of outside foul play." He added that the investigation is closed with no criminal charges being filed. The gunshot wound was confirmed by **Joseph Wendelken**, a spokesman for the Rhode Island state medical examiner.

Sergei Khrushchev had been a rocket scientist in the **Soviet Union**. He worked on the development of submarine-launched missiles from 1958 to 1968. Sergei Khrushchev's father was ousted in a **Communist Party** putsch by hardliners in 1964 and he died in 1971 at the age of 77.

In 1991, Khrushchev moved to Rhode Island, where he lectured at **Brown University**. He also taught at the **Naval War College** in **Newport, Rhode Island**. In July 1999, Khrushchev and his wife, **Valentina Golenko**, became U.S. citizens. They also remained citizens of Russia.

Oddly, Sergei Khrushchev's widow told **RIA-Novosti**, with regard to the gunshot wound, "Don't repeat this gossip to me . . . He died of old age, as the autopsy report says. He was sick for the last two years."

There is a big difference between dying of old age and dying from a gunshot wound to the head. The one-week delay in reporting Khrushchev's death to the public, the speed at which the police and medical examiner closed the case, and Khrushchev's widow's unusual statement to the Russian news agency bear all the markings of the official reasons given by the Russian government after a spate of recent suspicious deaths among journalists, medical personnel, and others in Russia.

The fact that the U.S. Department of Justice and other federal agencies have become totally politicized by Donald Trump far-right activists, including Attorney General **William Barr**, leaves open the possibility that certain naturalized citizens and political asylees, the latter including Turkish political and business leader **Fethulleh Gulen** (who Trump former national security adviser **Michael Flynn** was proposing kidnapping and renditioning to Turkey), could be subject to foreign retaliation on American soil.

In 2007, this editor had the pleasure of meeting Sergei Khrushchev at the National Press Club in Washington. [right] The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Soviet **Sputnik** satellite into orbit. On my prior trips to **Denmark**, my father's family members told me about my grandmother serving as Nikita Khrushchev's Danish-Russian interpreter during his visit to the country in what I recalled as 1963. When I mentioned this to Sergei





Khrushchev, he corrected me immediately, saying it was June 1964 and that he was on that same trip [Sergei fifth behind his father, left] and vividly remembered my grandmother, **Victoria K. Madsen**, who was somewhat well-known in the USSR owing to her work with the anti-Nazi Resistance during the war and her pre- and postwar leadership positions in the **Danish Communist Party (DKP)** and its newspaper, *Land og Folk*. Sergei Khrushchev's exact words were, "I remember your grandmother and the meeting was in 1964." Khrushchev added that her command of the Russian language was very good. The Khrushchev family arrived in Copenhagen on June 16, 1964, aboard the Soviet passenger ship *Bashkiria*. When my grandmother died in 1973, the leadership of the **Communist Party of the Soviet Union** sent a wreath to her short funeral ceremony in Copenhagen.

Sergei Khrushchev had helped his father write his four-volume memoir after his ouster from power and sent into internal exile in the Soviet Union. To the anger of the Soviet leadership under Leonid Brezhnev, the memoir manuscript was smuggled out of the Soviet Union and later translated into English.

Sergei Khrushchev has a son, also named Sergei. Another son from a previous marriage, Nikita, died from a stroke in 2007 at the age of 47.

Sergei Khrushchev's gunshot death may be a closed case as far as the Rhode Island medical examiner and Cranston police are concerned, but the anomalies in the Khrushchev death, particularly in a nation that is no longer governed by the rule of law, demand further investigation.

In October, Sergei Khrushchev's ashes will be interned in Moscow next to his father's grave.

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